

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 AGR-20 AID-20 RSR-01

/164 W

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R 041750Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0026

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 4096

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MO FR

SUBJECT: BENHIMA VISIT TO PARIS

1. COMMENTING ON GOM FOREIGN MINISTER BENHIMA'S VISIT TO PARIS AUGUST 29-31, FRENCH AMBASSADOR LEBEL TOLD ME SEPT 3 THAT IN FIRST MEETING WITH FRENCH BENHIMA STARTED OUT BY ARGUING THAT MOROCCO SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO PAY ANY COMPENSATION FOR FRENCH-OWNED LAND BEING RECOVERED. LEBEL SAID THAT FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT HAD ACIDULOUSLY MADE CLEAR THAT FRENCH COULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH A PRINCIPLE AND SPOKE OF EFFECT IT WOULD HAVE ON OTHER ASPECTS FRANCO-MOROCCAN RELATIONS, NOTABLY ON FRENCH ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, AND ON MOROCCO'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. BENHIMA THEN BACKED AWAY FROM HIS ORIGINAL POSITION. LEBEL SAID KING IS MISTAKEN IF HE THINKS HE CAN GET AWAY WITH JUST ALLOWING FRENCH SMALL HOLDERS TO REMAIN ON THEIR LANDS. THERE MUST BE SOME COMPENSATION FOR LAND TAKEN OVER.

2. LEBEL EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE TRANSFERS OF PROCEEDS
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SALES THIS YEAR'S CROPS WOULD BE PERMITTED.

3. COMMENT: WHILE MOROCCANS MAY BE WILLING ACCEPT PRINCIPLE OF PAYING SOME COMPENSATION, THEY HAVE STRESSED THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO PAY COMPLETE COMPENSATION AND HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR VIEW THAT LARGE FOREIGN LANDOWNERS HAVE MADE MORE THAN AMPLE PROFITS FROM USE OF LAND IN SEVENTEEN YEARS SINCE MOROCCAN INDEPENDENCE. MATTER WILL BE FURTHER DISCUSSED IN MEETINGS BETWEEN EXPERTS BOTH SIDES.
ROCKWELL

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